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UNCLAS STATE 180501

ALL POSTS FOR PAO, USSOCOM FOR POLAD

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: OPRC, KPAO

SUBJECT: WHA GUIDANCE, AUGUST 20, 2004

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Summary of Contents:

WHA Press Guidance, Aug 20 (Canada, Venezuela)

End Summary.

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WHA PRESS GUIDANCE, AUGUST 20, 2004:  
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-- CANADA: PRESIDENTIAL PERMIT PROCESS FOR INTERNATIONAL BRIDGES --

QUESTION: WHAT ARE THE STEPS IN THE PROCESS OF GETTING A PERMIT TO REPLACE AN EXISTING BRIDGE BETWEEN THE U.S. AND CANADA? WHAT IS STATE'S ROLE?

A: UNDER U.S. LAW, PERMISSION MUST BE OBTAINED FROM THE STATE DEPARTMENT FOR THE CONSTRUCTION AND MAINTENANCE AT THE BORDERS OF THE UNITED STATES OF FACILITIES, INCLUDING BRIDGES, CONNECTING THE UNITED STATES WITH A FOREIGN COUNTRY.

FOR AN EXPLANATION OF THE LAWS AND PROCEDURES INVOLVED, AND FOR INFORMATION ON THE ROLE OF THE STATE DEPARTMENT, PLEASE SEE OUR FACT SHEET ENTITLED PRESIDENTIAL PERMITS FROM THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE FOR FACILITIES ON THE U.S.-CANADA BORDER, AT [HTTP://WWW.STATE.GOV/P/WHA/RLS/FS/7895.HTM](http://WWW.STATE.GOV/P/WHA/RLS/FS/7895.HTM).

-- VENEZUELA: FRAUD CHARGES, SUMATE EXIT POLLS, AND THE OBSERVER AUDIT --

Q: ANY FURTHER REACTION TO CONTINUED OPPOSITION ALLEGATIONS OF VOTER FRAUD?

A: WE NOTE THE CONCERNs RAISED BY THE OPPOSITION.

WE HAVE URGED THE INTERNATIONAL OBSERVERS TO INVESTIGATE EXHAUSTIVELY ALL CREDIBLE CONCERNs REGARDING POSSIBLE ELECTORAL FRAUD EXPRESSED BY THE OPPOSITION.

WE AWAIT THE REPORT FROM THE OAS AND CARTER CENTER OBSERVERS.

Q: ANY RESPONSE TO ALLEGATIONS THAT SUMATE VIOLATED ELECTION NORMS BY REVEALING THE RESULTS OF THEIR EXIT POLLS, WHICH SHOWED CHAVEZ LOSING?

A: WE ARE NOT IN A POSITION TO ADDRESS THIS.

SUMATE IS A RESPECTED, INDEPENDENT NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATION THAT HAS PLAYED A VITAL ROLE IN PROMOTING A DEMOCRATIC AND CONSTITUTIONAL SOLUTION TO VENEZUELA'S POLITICAL CRISIS.

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DURING VENEZUELA'S YEAR-LONG REFERENDUM PROCESS, SUMATE'S LEADERS HAVE BEEN THE TARGETS OF INTIMIDATION AND THREATS.

WE VIEW THESE ALLEGATIONS IN THIS LIGHT.

Q: DO YOU HAVE A COMPREHENSIVE LIST OF ORGANIZATIONS IN VENEZUELA THAT HAVE RECEIVED U.S. FUNDING?

A: AS WE DO IN OTHER PARTS OF THE WORLD, THE UNITED STATES SUPPORTS PROGRAMS AND ORGANIZATIONS IN VENEZUELA, WHICH SEEK TO STRENGTHEN CIVIL SOCIETY AND DEMOCRATIC INSTITUTIONS. THESE PROGRAMS ARE OPEN TO ALL POLITICAL PARTIES.

THESE ORGANIZATIONS WORK TO ADVANCE PEACEFUL, DEMOCRATIC AND CONSTITUTIONAL PROCESSES IN THEIR COUNTRIES.

IF ASKED:

Q: WILL YOU ACCEPT THE RESULTS OF THE AUDIT?

A: WE AWAIT THE RESULTS OF THE AUDIT. WE WILL REVIEW THOSE RESULTS WHEN THEY ARE MADE AVAILABLE.

WE LOOK TO A TRANSPARENT AUDIT PROCESS TO ENSURE THAT THE AUGUST 15 REFERENDUM HELPS ACHIEVE A CONSTITUTIONAL, DEMOCRATIC, PEACEFUL AND ELECTORAL SOLUTION TO VENEZUELA'S POLITICAL IMPASSE.

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